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IS THE BIBLE THE WORD OF GOD?

Is the Bible The Word of God?

By

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Is the Bible the Word of God?

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Is the Bible the Word of God?

Dr. Eugene Stock has said, "When I was a boy, I read a story which showed me the different ways in which we can be sure that this great library of Sacred Books, which we call the Bible, is really the Word of God, his Revelation to mankind. The writer of the story had been explaining three different kinds of evidence—the Historical, the Internal, and the Experimental. Then he told how he once sent a boy to the chemist's to get some phosphorus. The boy brought back a little packet; was it phosphorus? The boy reported that he went to the shop and asked for phosphorus; that the chemist went to his shelves, took some kind of stuff from a jar, put it in the little packet, and gave it to him, and that he had brought it straight back. That was the historical evidence that the packet had phosphorus in it. Then the gentleman opened the packet. The substance inside looked like phosphorus and smelled like phosphorus. That was the internal evidence. Then he put a light to it—'See how

it burns!' That was the experimental evidence."

Along some such line as that we propose to set forth the evidence—so far as that can be done within strict limits—that the Bible is the Word of God. In reply to the question before us, we give a threefold answer, namely, It Seems to Be; It Claims to Be; and, It Proves to Be. The conclusiveness of the evidence is not in any one of these answers taken by itself, but in the three together, which constitute irrefragable proof that the Bible is of divine origin, and therefore of sovereign authority; that is, that it is the Word of God.

What evidence is there of this?

I. IT SEEMS TO BE

Think for a moment of—

1. The History of the Book—the External Evidence.

(1) *Its Origination.* In this respect no book has such a history as the Bible. Almost all books, except dictionaries, encyclopedias, and such like, are the productions each of an individual, and certainly each is the product of one generation. But not so the

Bible. This King of books is the result of productions extending over some sixteen hundred years, a period as long as from Diocletian to King George V., and is the work of some forty authors (the "Critics" would probably say of some four hundred!). The Bible, therefore, slowly grew under the hands of many men, in different countries, and across fifty-five generations. Before Christ came to this world the books which form our Old Testament had been collected, and were regarded as sacred books. Josephus said, "No one has dared either to add anything to them, or to take anything from them, or to alter anything. All Jews regard them as the teaching of God, and abide by them, and would gladly die for them." None of the Apocryphal books were included in the Old Testament Canon. The thirty-nine books which are in our Old Testament constituted our Lord's Bible, neither more nor less. In like manner, the New Testament was a growth, within a much briefer period of time, and at the end of three centuries these twenty-seven books were distinguished from all contemporaneous writings as being Holy Scripture, and the judgment of men, guided, we believe, by the Spirit of God, with reference to the books in both Testaments, was

not challenged for over fifteen centuries. When all the facts concerning the origin of these books are considered, we can only say, the Bible is a literary marvel, and a moral miracle. But think further of:

(2) *Its Preservation.* Not less amazing is the way in which these Scriptures have been preserved. We now know that writing was among the most ancient of arts, one practised from the very beginning. There is no reason to doubt that Noah took records with him into the ark; records which, in some form or another, had been accumulating for a millennium and a half. These were preserved from the flood, and constituted the basis of the earliest of writings. These, as they grew, were preserved, by divine Providence, through all the changing fortunes of Israel—in Egypt, in the Wilderness, in the Land, and in Babylonia. Collected during the inter-Testament period, they were alike a record of the past and a vision of the future, greatly cherished by the Jews. To these the New Testament writings in due course were added, the former being written in Hebrew, and the latter in Greek. All the original documents are lost, but what they contained has been preserved in manuscripts, versions, and the writings of the Fathers.

The history of this preservation is a wonderful one, as witness the story of the Sinaitic manuscript found by Dr. Tischendorf. Through the dark Middle Ages, extending across a thousand years, monks in their monasteries occupied themselves by making copies of Jerome's great version. This brings us to the fifteenth century, the greatest in the story of the Bible since the canon was settled, for it was then, as Professor Goldwin Smith has said, that "Greece arose from the dead with the New Testament in her hand"; and then, also, that printing was invented. But dark days were ahead, and before this great Book could become the glad possession of the people, it had to be suffered for and bled for. Nobly did the translators and reformers do their work, a work which could no more be destroyed than their spirit could be crushed. Then came our great Authorized Version in 1611, and the Revised in 1881-1885. Through all these long ages these Writings were preserved, on the one hand from corruption, and on the other from destruction, and this cannot but be regarded as another miracle. In connection with the external history of the Bible, one other thing must be noticed.

(3) *Its Circulation.* The circulation of

the Scriptures is a wonder which few appreciate, because figures do not readily impress us. But in this instance we should spare a few moments to think into these facts: the British and Foreign Bible Society provided for its war service alone 8,000,000 volumes of the Word of God, in 75 languages. In the year 1917-1918, the same society issued and circulated, in addition to the above, 9,387,-182 Bibles or portions, and its output during the four years of war amounted to 40,000,-000. Since the foundation of the Society, in 1804, it has issued over 293,000,000 copies of the Scriptures, 97,000,000 of which have been in English. These Scriptures are now being produced and circulated in 511 different languages.

This is the record of one society only. Add to the above totals the Scriptures which have been scattered by the Scripture Gift Mission, the Trinitarian Bible Society, the National Bible Society of Scotland, and others, and we shall then begin to apprehend the magnitude and the marvel of this work. Such a circulation could not have been possible except for the art of printing, and it is not without significance that the first complete book printed by the inventor of this art was a Bible, about 1445.

Judging, therefore, by the external history of the Bible, its wonderful origination, miraculous preservation, and amazing circulation, this is no work of unaided man; it can be nothing less, surely, than the Word of God.

Yet this is the least part of the evidence. More wonderful than the external history of the Bible is its internal power. So look now at

2. The Contents of the Book—the Internal Evidence. Let three things only be said about this.

(1) *It is Human, yet Divine.* Yes, the Bible is human, though some, out of a zeal which is not according to knowledge, have denied this. Those books have passed through the minds of men, are written in the language of men, were penned by the hands of men, and bear in their style the characteristics of men. Christ said, "A body hast thou prepared me" (Heb. 10:5). The body was not Christ, yet Christ could not have been manifested without a body. The Christ was *divine,* but his body was *human.* As with the Incarnate, so with the Written Word. The spirit is divine, but the form is human; the thought of God has been given a body in the language of men. The modes of human

expression are everywhere in evidence. The Scriptures are not all cast in one mold; there are here history, as in the Kings; Wisdom, as in Proverbs; Drama, as in Job; Poetry, as in the Psalms; Apocalypse, as in the Revelation; and Ethic, as in James. Those are the modes of human thought and expression, and the Bible follows them.

Then again, turn where we will in this library, we are face to face with personality and style. Paul is Paul, and John is John, and no one could imagine the writings of the one coming from the pen of the other. When God would give a revelation to men he did not do violence to human personality and style, but, rather, made use of these. And in yet another sense is the Bible human. Not only has it come to us through men, but it is all about men,—great men, fallible and erring men. Abram lied, David lusted, and Peter cursed — that is human enough. The Bible does not give us in human language the story of angels, but of men, and that is why it is read by men as no other book is; that accounts for its circulation and its power. Truly the Bible is a *human* book. And yet it is *divine*. Language, style, and subject-matter notwithstanding, this Book is more than human. There are other great human

books in the world, but none can compare with this, because none other is also divine. There are thoughts here which the human mind could never have created, and projects which the human will could never have embarked upon. Even the sin of man and man the sinner are not looked at from the human side, but from the divine. History itself is seen in these pages to be, not an agglomeration of fortuitous happenings, but a plan of God. If the unique glories of this revelation had not been mitigated by human shadows, could we have looked upon them, and lived? And the shadows without the glories would only have driven us to despair. But both are here. The Bible is divine, for it is the Voice of God, and it is human, for it is in the language of men, and what flesh is to spirit; speech is to thought. Further,

(2) *It is Manifold, yet One.* It is a Library, yet it is a Book. How remarkable that it is called *The Bible* (ὁ Βιβλος), seeing that there are here sixty-six books, shorter or longer, but it is not without reason.

How *manifold* is the Bible. It treats of a hundred subjects of the first importance, such as —The Origin of the Universe, The Creation of the Race, The History of Sin, The Divine Principles of Government, The

Rise and History of Israel, The Incarnation of God, The Life and Death of Jesus the Christ, The Institution and Progress of the Church, The Evangelization of the Gentile World, The Future of Israel, The Story of the Conflict Between Darkness and Light, The Final Facts, and other subjects innumerable. Here we read of Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Greece, Rome, Israel, Syria, and a host of smaller powers. Abram and Amraphel, Nimrod and Noah, Rebekah and Rameses, Joshua and Jezebel, Daniel and Darius, Pilate and Paul, and a multitude of others move across the stage of this story. Every variety of character and subject is found in this Book, making it the one dateless and universal Book; no one will call into question its manifoldness.

And yet it is *One*. The many colors make its light; the thousand threads weave its pattern; the countless themes reveal its subject. From beginning to end the theme is *Redemption;* and from beginning to end the subject is *Christ*. Here is a wonderful thing — law, and history, and drama, and poetry, and wisdom, and prophecy, and ethic, and apocalypse, all bound up in a single volume. Can such a mixture be anything but a muddle? Ordinarily that could be the only result; but

here all is in perfect harmony, all these books dovetail into one another in such a way as to be inseparable; these many parts in the Temple of Truth are essential to one another.

The Bible is a Library, and yet it is a Book, and that is true of no other collection of works in the world. Once again, it can be said of the Bible that

(3) *It is Ancient, yet Modern.* How *ancient* it is difficult for us to realize. Here, for instance, is a poem over *three thousand three hundred years old* — Psalm 90. How was life viewed at that distance from our day?

Abram, the Bedouin sheikh, lived his life and made his contribution to world-history *four thousand years ago*! The king of Egypt whose embalmed body may be seen in the museum in Cairo was contemporary with Moses, about *three thousand four hundred years ago.*

Cities, such as Nineveh and Babylon, once thought to be impregnable, and empires such as the Assyrian and Roman, once regarded as indestructible, have long since crumbled to dust, and are now chiefly of archeological interest.

When Ezra was a youth in Babylon, the battles of Marathon, Thermopylæ, and Sala-

mis were fought; Pindar was writing his Odes, and Æschylus his Tragedies, and Confucius was inaugurating an age in China. And it will be well to remember that Nehemiah was contemporary with Herodotus, "the father of history," and with the great Socrates. These are names that take us into a remote past, and to that past the Old Testament belongs. Paul was contemporary with Seneca and Pliny, and John reached to the time of Tacitus and Suetonius. All that seems and is far away. The Bible is a very ancient Book. Its last chapters were written over eighteen hundred years ago, and its first chapters probably fifty-five hundred years ago!

But it is difficult to believe it because the Bible is so *modern.* The ink might scarcely be dry on the page. There are millions of books of recent date which are already out of date, but this old Book is the most modern of all. Why do not men leave the Bible alone? If they believe it to be a pious fraud, or a collection of myths, why, having said so, are they not done with it?

The answer is, *because they cannot.* Samuel Taylor Coleridge said that for him the most convincing proof of the divinity of the Bible was that it found him at deeper depths

of his being than any other book. That is what the Bible does with all of us, whether we acknowledge it or not; and that is why we cannot leave it alone. I suppose the most recent thing in print is the newspaper. But is it more recent than the Bible?

Dr. Joseph Parker has written eloquently on this point. He says: "What a book is the Bible in the mere matter of variety of contents! Everything seems to be in it — poem, narrative, intelligence, judgment, battle, prayer, song, anathema, and benediction. The bush is common enough. But what of the fire which makes the shepherd turn aside? The bread is such as has been used at supper, yet presently it will become the body of Christ! Paul is almost in heaven, yet in the very height of his anticipation he asks for his parchments and his cloak, and he knows exactly where both are left.

"Whole pages are taken up with obscure names, and more is told of a genealogy than of the day of judgment. Stories are half told, and the night falls before we can tell where victory lay. Where is there anything to correspond with this? Not in any book, certainly; but in actual life there is the self-same thing over again without the loss of one line. If the seer could print for us what he

sees on any one day in the year he would print a second edition of the Bible. We should have it all over again, including, perhaps, something even of creation itself, with its light, its ascending and descending waters, its trees bringing forth each after its kind, its sunny day, its starry night; but the humanity would be the same, still more vividly — family life, love, fear, envy, covetousness, magnanimity; chosen people and alien lands; temples warm with the fire of the Lord, and houses of vain and corrupt idolatry; the noise of war and the song of peace; shepherds keeping their flocks and soldiers listening for the foe; David in the wilderness and Jonah on the sea; weird dreams, spectral hands on the wall, baffled magicians and truth-telling prophets; psalms for which no music is good enough, and proverbs that glisten with wit. All these, and more, we should have on every or any day in the year if the sun could but print as well as shine!

"This is just the Bible. It is a page torn out of the volume of human life, only torn by the hand of God, annotated by his Spirit.

"What is the daily newspaper but a revised translation of the Bible, often, indeed, with God left out in the spelling, though he cannot be left out in reality. Take to-morrow's

newspaper in one hand, and the Bible in the other, and see if the paper be not full of repetitions, and if there be not something like an echo in all its utterances.

Is that true? Then this ancient Book is the most modern of all, this first Word is also the last. It is true of the Bible as of Christ, just because it is of Christ, that it is the Alpha and the Omega; it is the A and the Z of literature.

What Calvin said of the Psalms is true of the whole Bible, it is "a perfect anatomy of the human soul," and until entirely new elements are introduced into the field of human nature and experience, this oldest Book will remain the most modern. After what has here been said, in answer to the question, *What evidence is there that the Bible is the Word of God?* is it too much to claim that—*It seems to be?* Does not the history of the Book, its external evidence, as seen in its origination, preservation, and circulation, point to that? And does not the content of the Book, its internal evidence, as seen in its humanity and divinity, its manifoldness and unity, its antiquity and modernness, point to that?

Truly, *it seems to be;* and yet that is the least part of the evidence.

The second line of evidence which I present is, that

II. IT CLAIMS TO BE

In dealing with this subject we must consider the claims made by each of the Testaments for itself and for each other, and as these claims are many and varied, all that we pretend to do here is to indicate a line of evidence that the Bible is the Word of God, which shall be sufficient to prove the claim, and, we trust, suggestive enough to provoke some to further search.

1. The Old Testament. The inquiry here is twofold: first, the Old Testament's witness to itself, and then, the New Testament's witness to the Old. And let us be perfectly fair as we pursue the subject, bearing in mind that we are to hear what the Bible has to say about itself. In a court of law we assume that a witness will speak the truth, and must accept what he says unless we have good grounds for suspecting him, or can prove him a liar. Surely the Bible should be given the same opportunity to be heard, and should receive a like patient and unprejudiced hearing.

(A) *The Old Testament's Witness to Itself.*—The field here is so wide that necessarily we must place the investigation within certain limits, and so shall consider only the testimony of the prophets and of prophecy.

1. *The Testimony of the Prophets.* One or two things under this head claim our careful attention, and first:

(1) *The Prophetic Function.* What are we to understand by the word "prophet," and what was the office of such an one? The answer to these questions will contribute much to the evidence that the Bible is the Word of God.

The word "prophet" is represented in the Hebrew Scriptures by at least three words, all of which are found in 1 Chronicles 29:29: "Now the acts of David the King, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer [*Roëh*], and in the book of Nathan the prophet [*Nābî'*], and in the book of Gad the seer [*Chozéh*]."

Roëh means one who is taught in visions divinely brought, and is usually translated "seer"; that is, one who sees. *Chozéh* means one who beholds, who gazes, and is used constantly with reference to the prophetical vision. *Nābî'* is from a verb which

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means "to cause to bubble up." This is the word commonly used, and signifies "to pour forth words abundantly," "from the Divine prophets having been supposed to be moved rather by another's powers than their own" ("Gesenius"): hence, we read that "men sent by God spoke as they were impelled by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21. Weymouth). So the *Nābî'* is "the utterer of a divine message, one who conveys to his fellows truth otherwise hidden, and imparted to himself by God for them. He is, in short, *the mouth of God's mind towards men.*" (Findlay.)

It would seem that the same persons are designated by all these words, the first two pointing to the prophets' power of seeing the visions presented to them by God, and the last, from their function of revealing and proclaiming God's truth to man.

It is clear from the above that the prophet was one who made known the divine will under supernatural impulse. This is pointedly illustrated by Exodus 4:16; 7:1, where Moses is seen to be the "mouth" of God to Aaron, and Aaron the "mouth" of Moses to the people. It was the chief office of the prophet to reveal God's will and ways to man, not only in the capacity of "interpre-

ter," but by predicting future events, and foretelling the coming and work of Christ.

The bearing of all this upon the subject in hand must be apparent. If what has been said is true, then the writings of the prophets are the Word of God; and remember, most of the Old Testament writers were prophets, some *descriptive,* and some *predictive.*

In the next place consider,

(2) *The Prophetic Consciousness.* We have said that the prophets were the spokesmen of God to man, and received their communications by the agency of the Spirit. But it will be asked, "How did they discern what was the will of God, under what conditions, and in what way did they receive divine communications?" A fairly exhaustive answer to these inquiries will be found in Numbers 12:6-8: "Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, the Lord will make himself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream." But "with him [Moses] will I speak mouth to mouth."

It will be observed that communications were by "visions," "dreams," and "mouth to mouth." Between the first two there is no precise distinction, but the third was a special mode of communication, and of rare occurrence. Dream and vision pre-

dominated in the earliest and latest types of prophecy, but in the chief middle prophets of the canon these phenomena almost disappear, and the prophets speak in the full and manly exercise of their rational powers. In both cases the prophets were conscious that they were the messengers of God, speaking in his name the word which they first received from him. Isaiah says: "The Lord Jehovah hath given me the tongue of those that are schooled, he awakeneth mine ear morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear as those that are schooled."

He speaks these words in "sober certainty of waking sense," with clear consciousness of his high calling. Further, frequently the prophets were conscious that they acted under divine restraint rather than willingly: "The Spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me" (Ezek. 3:14).

Compare further Exodus 4:11, 12; Isaiah 8:11; Jeremiah 1:9; Hosea 9:7; and frequently they did not comprehend the meaning of their own predictions, for they "inquired and searched diligently . . . what manner of time the Spirit of Christ who was in them did point to, when he testified beforehand

the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Peter 1:10, 11).

It was the function of the priests to represent the people before Jehovah, but of the prophets to represent Jehovah to the people, and of this the prophets themselves were fully conscious, hence their fearlessness, and the note of authority in their messages.

It is quite evident from this that the prophets were sensible that they were called of God, instructed by God, and sent for God: "Surely the Lord Jehovah will do nothing but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7).

Of this passage Professor Findlay says, "Amos evidently views the order to which he belongs as an indispensable intermediary between God and his people, the channel through which he declares his mind to them, whether in favor or censure."

But let us consider now more definitely,

(3) *The Prophetic Witness.* It is when we learn what the prophets declared as to the origin and character of their messages that the evidence becomes overwhelming that the Old Testament Scriptures are the Word of God.

It is not possible to do more here than briefly tabulate their testimony, testimony so

abundant and explicit that we are compelled, on the one hand, to believe that these writers were "incorrigible liars and crazy fanatics," or, on the other hand, that what they said is true. In the

(*a*) *Pentateuch* we find such words and expressions as the following: "The Lord God *called* unto Adam and *said*"; "The Lord *said* unto Noah," and Abram, and Isaac, and Jacob; "God *spake* unto Israel"; Moses told all the people all the *words of the Lord,* and all the judgments; and all the people answered with one voice and said, All *the words which the Lord hath said* will we do. And Moses wrote all *the words of the Lord*"; "The writing was the *writing of God,* graven upon the tables"; "These are *the words which the Lord hath commanded*"; "The Lord called unto Moses, and *spake* unto him out of the tent of meeting, *saying*"; "Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear *my words*"; "The *voice* of God *speaking* out of the midst of the fire"; "out of heaven he made thee to hear his *voice*"; "Thou heardest his *words*"; "The Lord *talked* with you face to face."

Expressions such as "God said," "the Lord spake saying," "the Lord commanded," and "the word of the Lord," occur in the Penta-

teuch alone nearly 700 times, so that this part of the Old Testament writings claims to be the Word of God, and assuredly is.

The testimony is not less considerable and emphatic in

(*b*) *The Historical Books.* "After the death of Moses . . . the Lord *spake* unto Joshua . . . *saying*"; "The *word of the Lord* was precious in those days"; "The Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by *the word of the Lord*"; David says, "The spirit of the Lord *spake* by me, and *his word* was in my tongue. The God of Israel *said,* The Rock of Israel *spake* to me"; "The *word of the Lord* came to Solomon *saying*"; "The Lord *testified* against Israel, and against Judah, by the hand of all the prophets, and by all the seers, *saying*"; "Thus *saith* the Lord God of Israel"; "The Lord spoke unto Gad, David's seer, *saying*"; "Micaiah said, As the Lord liveth, even what my God *saith,* that will I speak"; "They mocked the *messengers of God,* and despised *his words*"; "The *word* that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I *speak*"; "All that *the Lord speaketh,* that I must do"; "I cannot go beyond the *commandment of the Lord.*" Such expressions as these occur considerably over four hundred times between the books of

Joshua and Esther; and, let us remember, these plain declarations are only a small part of the evidence: the entire history is written from the divine standpoint, and the divine purpose is as manifest in the omissions as in the selections.

(*c*) *The Poetical Books* bear the same testimony. "The Lord *said* unto Satan"; "Then answered the Lord unto Job out of the whirlwind and *said*"; in Psalm 19 we read of "The *law*, the *testimony*, the *statutes*, the *commandment*, and the *judgments* of the Lord"; and the whole of Psalm 119 is a song in praise of God's Word, that Word being mentioned as many times as there are verses in the Psalm. The entire Psalter is the answer of God to the infinitely diversified needs of men, and that is why it is more read than perhaps any other part of the Bible. And when we come to

(*d*) *The Prophecies*, it is scarcely necessary to quote, as predictive prophecy by its very nature is supernatural, and the prophets men sent from God and instructed by him.

Yet it may be well to state that such expressions as "Hear the *word of the Lord*"; "*saith* the Lord"; "I heard the *voice* of the Lord *saying*"; "The Lord hath *spoken*"; "It was *revealed in mine ears*

by the Lord of hosts"; "The *word* of our God"; "My *word* that goeth forth out of my *mouth*"; "The *word* of the Lord came unto me"; "Whatsoever *I command* thee thou shalt speak"; "I have put *my words* in thy mouth"; "The *word* of the Lord came unto me, *saying*"; "*He said* unto me"; "*He spake* unto me"; "Thou shalt speak *my words* unto them"; "*My words* that *I shall speak* unto thee"; "When *I speak* with thee"; "I heard *the voice of his words*"; "The Lord hath *spoken* it"; "Thus *saith the Lord*";—such expressions as these occur in the prophecies over thirteen hundred times, and double that number of times in the whole of the Old Testament. Truly this is none other than the voice of him who sitteth on the throne. The testimony of the Prophets is united and abundant that these Scriptures are "the *Word of God* which liveth and abideth forever." But to their personal witness must be added that of their writings, the substance of which furnishes the same evidence, so look at

2. *The Testimony of the Prophecies.* Here we shall look briefly at the character, substance, and harmony of Hebrew prophecy.

(1) *The Character of Hebrew Prophecy.* It is perfectly true that the utterances and writings of the prophets arose out of, and are

to be interpreted in, the light of their national history at its successive stages, and that a large proportion of these writings is strictly historical in character; but that, notwithstanding, it is simply a fact that prophecy is chiefly predictive, and is therefore revelation, that is, the *Word of God.* Yet this has been and still is challenged.

Dr. A. B. Davidson wrote: "It is now commonly admitted that the essential part of Biblical Prophecy does not lie in predicting contingent events, but in divining the essentially religious in the course of history. . . . *In no prophecy can it be shown that the literal predicting of distant historical events is contained.* . . . In conformity with the analogy of prophecy generally, special predictions concerning Christ do not appear in the Old Testament."

Canon Driver wrote: "To base a promise upon a condition of things not yet existent, and without any point of contact with the circumstances or situation of those to whom it is addressed, *is alien to the genius of prophecy.*"

He applies this principle of interpretation to the second division of the book of Isaiah:

"*Judged by the analogy of prophecy,* this

constitutes the strongest possible presumption that the author actually lived in the period which he thus describes, and is not merely (as has been supposed) Isaiah immersed in spirit in the future, and holding converse, as it were, with the generations yet unborn. *Such an immersion in the future would be not only without parallel in the Old Testament; it would be contrary to the nature of prophecy.*"

And Dr. David Smith, of Londonderry, with more assurance than understanding in the matter, writes, "Prophecy-mongering is morally and intellectually ruinous. It issues in madness." The prophets *never predict far remote events.*"

The objection to the idea of prediction underlying these and all other similar opinions is that "to concede the quality of prediction in the writings of the prophets is to admit the miraculous." Certainly, and it is for that very fact that we contend. If miracles are either physically or morally impossible, then prediction is impossible. This is only saying that belief in prediction is not compatible with the theory of Atheism, or with the philosophy which rejects the overruling Providence of a personal God.'

How weighty in this connection are the

words of Bishop Westcott: "A divine counsel was wrought out in the course of the life of Israel. We are allowed to see in the people of God signs of the purpose of God for humanity; *the whole history is prophetic.* It is not enough to recognize that the Old Testament contains prophecies: the Old Testament *is one vast prophecy.* The application of prophetic words in each case has regard to the ideal indicated by them, and is not limited by the historical fact with which they are connected."

Let the matter be submitted to the test of fact, and the problem will be to say how any one in his senses could ever deny that there are hundreds of predictions in the Old Testament which have already become history, and there are hundreds more which, we believe, will become history in God's own time. This brings us to—

(2) *The Substance of Hebrew Prophecy.* It is, in the main, threefold:

(*a*) *Gentile Prophecies.* There are scores of these, affecting the smaller nations such as the Syrians, Philistines, Ninevites, Edomites, Moabites, which have long since been fulfilled, and many concerning other Gentile powers which have for centuries been in progress of fulfilment, and are yet to be ful-

filled. The outstanding illustration and proof will be found in Daniel 2.

Such predictions are not the guesses of men, but the Word of God.

(*b*) *Israelitish Prophecies.* No one can seriously question the fact that Israel's future course was early predicted, and that up to the present time those predictions have been fulfilling with unmistakable exactness. Take for illustration the following: "I will make your cities waste and bring your sanctuaries into desolation. And I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished. And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you; and your lands shall be desolate, and your cities waste."

The evidence that this is the Word of God is twofold—firstly, it was spoken before the Israelites entered Canaan, but assumes that they would do so, *which they did*; and secondly, those things predicted of them at a time subsequent to their possession of the land *have literally come to pass.*

To this add those passages which predict the restoration of Israel, a restoration which, obviously, has not yet taken place: "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches

thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old. . . . And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities and inhabit them . . . and I will plant them upon their own land, and *they shall no more be pulled up out of their land* which I have given them, *saith the Lord thy God.*"

It is the Lord who has declared this, therefore it must be so. Further, the Old Testament is full of

(*c*) *Messianic Prophecies.* There are at least three hundred of these traceable, many of which were fulfilled by Christ's first advent, and the remainder shall be fulfilled at his second advent. Nowhere is the evidence of genuine prediction more manifest than in those passages of the Old Testament that tell of the Messiah. Such passages are so numerous, and go into such detail, that our intelligence is more greatly taxed to believe that they are not predictive than to believe that they are. And if they are predictive, they are of divine and not of human origin.

(3) *The Harmony of Hebrew Prophecy.* It follows from what has been said that all the notes of the prophetic Scriptures must harmonize. God cannot contradict himself. Prophecies were being written or uttered

concerning Israel, the Gentiles, and the Christ, for over a thousand years, and by men of very varied intellectual ability and social standing, and widely separated even when contemporaneous, yet, though there was no collusion, there is not contradiction. How is that to be accounted for? Only in one way, namely, that "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; that is, the prophecies are the Word of God.

This, then, is part of the Old Testament's witness to itself that it is of divine origin. The evidence of prophecy is particularly valuable because no spiritual qualification is necessary in order to apprehend it. Given common-sense, a few sound principles of interpretation, and a spirit of fairness, and it is demonstrable that, in great detail, events were predicted hundreds of years before they became history, and as it was not and is not in the power of man to forewrite history, these prophecies must be the Word of God. Consider now,

B. *The New Testament's Witness to the Old.* It were as easy to separate a superstructure from its foundation as to separate the New Testament from the Old, for they stand in that relation to each other. The New Testament assumes the Old Testament,

and assumes that it is of divine origin and authority. If there were no Old Testament, hundreds of passages in the New Testament would be meaningless; and if the Old Testament be not the Word of God, the whole assumption and attitude of the New Testament is wrong. That is just another way of saying that the New Testament bears witness to the Old Testament as being of divine origin; and by this we mean that it *is* and not merely *contains* the Word of God, that the inspiration is both of *thought* and of *record,* sometimes of *thought,* but always of *record.*

This, at any rate, one may affirm: that if the Old Testament is not the Word of God, it is certain that the New Testament is not, because, in that event, its entire assumption would be an error, and God cannot be guilty of error. The Old Testament is in the very warp and woof of the New Testament, there being, in addition to hundreds of allusions, at least three hundred plain quotations; and these latter are made, not in the way of contradiction but of affirmation of the Old Testament, not in the way of denial, but of fulfilment. If the Old Testament be not the Word of God, then Christ and his apostles were wrong; and alas! there are not lacking those who affirm that they were, for no one

with any show of reason has suggested that our Lord and his apostles ever impugned the authority of the Old Testament.

But let us look at the evidence, and first,

1. *The Testimony of Jesus Christ.* A rapid survey of the Gospels will suffice to show that Christ deliberately placed the seal of his approval and authority upon the Old Testament Scriptures in their parts, and as a whole; and that not only before the Cross, but more emphatically after.

The passages from which we learn that Christ believed these Scriptures to be the Word of God may be divided into three classes:

Those which refer to particular narratives.

Those which declare that the prophets were divine agents.

Those which endorse the Old Testament as a whole.

Look at a few illustrations of each of these.

(1) *Those passages which refer to particular narratives.* There are passages in which our Lord endorses as historical, narratives which modern scholarship (!) pronounces to be "mythical" or "legendary," as, for example, the stories of the Flood (Matt. 24: 37-39); of the doings of Elijah and Eli-

sha (Luke 4:25-27; of Noah; Lot and his wife; of Sodom and Gomorrah (Luke 17:26-32; Matt. 11:21-24); of Jonah in the fish's belly (Matt. 12:40); of many others. Denial here is not of the divine *utterance,* but of the divine *action*; but Christ declares that God did so act, and that the record is true.

(2) *Those passages which declare that the prophets were divine agents.* There are further those passages which reflect our Lord's belief that the Old Testament Scriptures were of divine origin, by declaring that the human speaker or writer was not the *originator,* but the *bearer* only, of his message.

"All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was *spoken by the Lord through* the prophet, saying . . ."

"Thus it is written *through* the prophet."

"Then was fulfilled that which was spoken *through* Jeremiah the prophet."

And finally,

(3) *Those passages in which our Lord endorses the Old Testament as a whole.* Christ began his public ministry by using these Scriptures with which to visit the onslaughts of the Devil, and his thrice-repeated "It is written" is double evidence that the passages quoted are divinely in-

spired, first, by reason of his making use of them in that way at such a solemn time, and then by reason of the effect they had upon his enemy: "then the devil leaveth him."

Further, allow the following passages their full weight, and then say what they claim and prove with reference to Christ's conception of the Old Testament:

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil, for verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled."

Referring to the way the Pharisees treated a certain Old Testament statute, he said, "Full well ye reject the *commandment of God* . . . making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition." What Moses wrote was therefore the "Word of God." Again:

"Have ye not read that which was *spoken unto you by God,* saying . . . "

"David himself said *by the Holy Spirit,* The *Lord said* to *my Lord.*"

"The Scripture cannot be broken."

"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But

how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? . . . All this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled."

"After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were accomplished, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst."

Alas, that there should be those who, assuming our Lord's fallibility, would not regard the above utterances as carrying much weight. But what are such going to do with Christ's post-resurrection affirmations?

"Beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."

"These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me."

Could it be granted — which it is not — that he might have erred before the Cross in his reading of the Old Testament, that stricture certainly cannot apply to him after his resurrection; yet it is then that he categorically endorses the whole of the Old Testament in the form in which the Jews have it to this day, the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms.

About these and similar passages let two things here be said: First, that the word "Scripture" is never used of any *writings* except the sacred Scriptures; and, secondly, that Christ did not come to do the bidding or fulfil the purpose of men, but of God, and that he was conscious of what underlies all the passages just quoted.

We endorse without reserve the words of the late Bishop Moule: "The New Testament as a whole is a mass of valid historical evidence to the opinions of Jesus Christ. And in this character it attests beyond a doubt his profound veneration for the Holy Scriptures then existing; that is to say, for the Old Testament as, in substance and practically in detail, it exists to-day. For him it possessed the peculiar and awful characteristic of divine authority. He stated no theory of its construction, but, looking upon it as it existed, he recognized in it the decisive utterance of God, even in its minor features of expression. For the mind which recognizes in Jesus Christ all that he claimed to be, this verdict on the supernatural character and divine authority of the Old Testament is final."

2. *The Testimony of the Apostles.* Christ's Bible was the Bible of the apostles, and his

attitude towards and interpretation of it were theirs. All the evidence proves this, so that attacks made upon the apostles are virtually attacks on Christ, for they were prophets sent by God and taught by God. But let us look at a few passages in which the apostles and others bear testimony to the Old Testament as of divine authority, passages in which this authority is always assumed where it is not plainly declared:

(1) *The Virgin Mary,* in her beautiful song, modeled on Hannah's, says, "*He spake* to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever"; and what he said to Abraham was *written,* so that it is the *Word of God.*

(2) *Zacharias,* filled with the Holy Spirit, prophesied, saying, "*He spake* by the mouth of his *holy prophets,* which have been since the world began."

A man filled with the Holy Spirit, as Zacharias was, could not attribute to God what were but the pious thoughts and utterances of men.

(3) *Peter* in his addresses and letters has the same belief. At Pentecost he said: "Brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which *the Holy Spirit* by the mouth of David *spake*"; and again, "Lord, thou art God . . . *who* by the mouth of thy

servant David *said*"; and yet again, "*The God of glory* appeared unto our father Abraham . . . and *said* unto him." Right or wrong, Peter certainly believed that the Old Testament was a divine revelation, and that God spoke to and through the fathers and the prophets.

Turning to the letters of this apostle, we find two passages which are classic on this subject. Speaking of the present salvation, he says, "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ who was in them did signify, when *he testified beforehand* the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

This passage teaches at least two great truths: first, that what the prophets wrote — for it is written prophecy that is in view here — was what the Spirit communicated to and through them; and second, that these revelations frequently transcended their own comprehension, and led them to search into one another's prophecies, to learn, if possible, what was meant and what time was indicated.

The other passage reads: "No prophecy of

the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but *holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*"

Between this and the rationalistic view of the Old Testament there can be no compromise; one must be right and the other wrong, and there can be no doubt as to which is right. To this let us add that of

(4) *Paul,* who was a scholar in the presence of whom some who pride themselves on their scholarship should speak with more modesty. What was Paul's view of the Old Testament? The Bible was to him, as Meyer says, "A history of divine acts, and the unfolding of divine ideas, continually manifesting the superintendence of a divine sovereignty; not a history of the world, or of all God's providence in it, but only of one kingdom and society, which was elected out of the rest to exhibit principles applicable to all kingdoms and societies, and to preserve certain privileges with which it was provisionally endowed in order that they might ultimately be extended to the whole race of man."

This view is reflected in all Paul's speeches and letters, both in the way of affirmation and implication. Here are a few illustrations:

"*Well spake the Holy Spirit* through Isaiah the prophet."

"The Gospel of God, *which he had promised* afore through the prophets in *the Holy Scriptures.*"

"What saith *the Scripture?*" "*The Scripture saith* unto Pharaoh."

"*He saith* also in Hosea." "*The Scripture foreseeing.*"

These passages refer to the Scripture or the Scriptures as the body of divine revelation, as the very voice of God and words of God; the divine thoughts and utterances are here personified; the Scriptures have not only *voice,* but *vision*; they not only *say,* but *see.* How entirely this was Paul's reading of the Old Testament may be judged from the fact that he quotes from twenty-five of its thirty-nine books. According to Westcott and Hort, there are seventy-four quotations in Romans, twenty-nine in 1 Corinthians, twenty in 2 Corinthians, thirteen in Galatians, twenty-one in Ephesians, six in Philippians, four in Colossians, seven in 1 Thessalonians, nine in 2 Thessalonians, two in 1 Timothy, four in 2 Timothy, and three in Titus. These Scriptures are appealed to as being authoritative, as setting forth the mind and acts of God.

But in addition to all this, it is plain from Paul's writings that his view of any part of the Old Testament was also his view of the whole, for there are passages in which he speaks of his Bible (the Old Testament) in its completeness. What does he say about it?

"*Believing all things* which are according to the law, and which are written in the prophets."

"These things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come."

"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope."

And the classic passage, the full force of which not even the authority of the Revised Version can rob us:

"From a child thou hast known the *Holy Scriptures,* which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God [is God-breathed], and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of

God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

The Authorized Version fairly gives the meaning of the original, and it is simply absurd to render it "Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable." Of course, what God has inspired is profitable; but what Scriptures has he inspired? Some or all? Paul declares, *"All Scripture is God-breathed."*

But there are more witnesses.

(5) *John* commences his Epistle by saying that "the Word of life was from the beginning." Westcott interprets this "Word" of "those truths which were gradually realized in the course of ages, through the teaching of patriarchs, law-givers and prophets, and lastly of the Son himself." In that view, the Old Testament is in the first place the "word of life," and must therefore be as truly the word of God as Christ was the Son of God.

Again, John says: "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the *word of God* abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."

In view of the time at which the Epistle was written, the reference here could quite well be to the Scriptures of the New Testa-

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ment, but the evidence is still valid, as the New Testament rises from and rests upon the Old Testament as "The Word of God."

Add to this testimony that furnished by the book of Revelation, which, just because it is *revelation,* is the Word of God.

Speaking of this last book of the Bible, the late Professor Milligan wrote: "The book is absolutely steeped in the memories, the incidents, the thoughts, and the language of the Church's past. To such an extent is this the case that it may be doubted whether it contains a single figure not drawn from the Old Testament, or a single complete sentence not more or less built up of materials brought from the same source. It is a perfect mosaic of passages from the Old Testament, at one time quoted verbally, at another referred to by distinct allusion; now taken from one scene in Jewish history, and now again from two or three together." Out of the total number of 404 verses in this book, about 265 verses contain Old Testament language, and about 550 references are made to Old Testament passages — a fact significant enough. Logic comes to our aid here: If this book is a revelation from and of God, seeing that the book is substantially the Old Testament in a

new combination, therefore the Old Testament must be a revelation from and of God.

John's view of the Old Testament was that of his brother apostles and of his Master — all regarded it to be the Word of God. So did

(6) *The Writer to the Hebrews.* With perhaps one exception (4:7), the quotations from the Old Testament in this epistle, of which there are many, are not attributed to those whom God employed to speak or write, but are given as being Holy Scripture. "Wherefore as the *Holy Spirit saith*"; "As *he* said"; "the *Holy Spirit* also is a witness to us; for after that *he* had said before"; "if they escaped not who refused *him that spake on earth,* much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." Westcott has made it clear that the contrast here is not between Moses and Christ, but between the character of these two revelations which were made, "on earth" and "from heaven." The point is that both covenants are revelations, that alike the Law and the Gospel are the Word of God.

This is emphasized at the beginning as well as at the end of the epistle: *"God having of old time spoken* to the fathers in the prophets in many parts and in many modes,

spake to us at the end of these days in his Son."

"From first to last it is maintained that *God spake to the fathers in the prophets.* The message through the Son takes up and crowns all that had gone before. . . . The New is the consummation of the Old. . . . There is nothing in the Old which is not taken up and transfigured in the New." If the Old Testament be not the Word of God, the foundation is knocked from the argument of this epistle; it exists only on that assumption. To the same effect is the testimony of

(7) *James.* "Whoso looketh into *the perfect law of liberty,* and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his doing."

The "perfect law of liberty" is, of course, the Old Testament revelation of the divine will. As no law of man's is perfect, that to which James refers must be God's. Again, he calls it "The royal law according to the *Scripture.*"

And in quoting some words of the wise he attributes them to God: "Wherefore *he saith,* God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."

But this epistle is saturated with the Old

Testament; its language and its atmosphere are those of the Old Covenant, only that covenant is seen in the light of the Sermon on the Mount. To the same effect is

(8) *Jude.* Though there are here only twenty-five verses, yet reference is made to Moses, Cain, Balaam, Korah, and Enoch; also to the deliverance from Egypt, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and to the Israelites who perished in the wilderness. And these references, as everywhere in the New Testament, are made on the assumption, not only that the Old Testament is actual and accurate history, but that in that history God stands revealed, and for our sakes has caused it to be written.

It is surely an impressive fact that whereas you will find about 280 direct quotations from the Old Testament in the New, and these taken from 28 of its 39 books, you will not find one clear quotation from the Apocrypha. No doubt the apostles were acquainted with these latter writings, and in all probability in Hebrews 11: 33-37 reference is made to the books of Maccabees, but the New Testament writers certainly knew the difference between the Apocrypha and the Old Testament writings, and knew

the latter, not the former, to be of divine origin and authority.

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum," Jesus Christ and all his apostles believed that the Old Testament as they had it, and as we now have it, was the record of a divine eternal purpose in process of outworking; that, not only in its various parts, but also in its completeness, it is "Holy Scripture." This view of these Writings may be challenged, as, alas, it has been; but at any rate it cannot be questioned that that was Christ's and the apostles' view. The Old Testament, therefore, *claims to be the Word of God.* We now turn to

2. THE NEW TESTAMENT. And here again, as in the previous case, it is our purpose to examine the evidence, from whatsoever quarter, and to be subject to the result. The attempt to make the truth fit into our theories is both foolish and useless. Wisdom and honesty will espouse that theory which the truth dictates. Let us look first at

(A) *The Old Testament's Witness to the New.* If what has already been said has been to any purpose, it will follow that the witness of the Testaments is reciprocal, that the one implies and necessitates the other, and

that, therefore, what can truly be predicated of the one stands good for the other. If the New bears witness to the Old, so does the Old to the New. The claim of the New Testament is that it is the *realization* of that of which the Old Testament is the *anticipation.* And the demand of the Old Testament is that its anticipation find a realization, a demand to which the New Testament responds. It follows, therefore, that if the Old Testament is the Word of God, the New Testament must be so also. The witness of the Old Testament to the New is that of "a mould to a medallion, the same image being found in both — sunk in the surface of the one, projecting from the surface of the other." It is a witness of relationship, as of hand to hand, as of root to flower, as of seed to harvest, as of portrait to person, as of shadow to substance; so that what is true of the root, the seed, the portrait, and the shadow on the one hand, is necessarily true of the flower, the harvest, the person, and the substance on the other hand.

The two Testaments stand in relation to each other as the cherubim of old, facing each other over the mercy-seat, and beaten out of the same piece of gold. One thing is perfectly certain,—namely, that the credit or

discredit of either Testament is shared by its fellow; that the Old Testament and the New Testament stand or fall together.

But let us examine this truth somewhat more closely. A large part of the witness under review is to be found in

1. *The Unity of the Testaments.* Modern Biblical criticism, for obvious reasons, little regards this, but here it is, and avoiding or denying it does not alter the fact.

No one can read these Scriptures with any care without, sooner or later, discovering a five-fold unity.

(1) *There is Structural Unity.* This may be regarded as coincidental and scarcely valid evidence. It is, nevertheless, most impressive, and might be illustrated from many standpoints. Look, for instance, at the three-fold division of each Testament:

First, *Historic:* Genesis to Esther (Old Testament), Matthew to Acts (New Testament);

Second, *Didactic:* Job to Canticles (Old Testament), Romans to Jude (New Testament);

Third, *Prophecies:* Isaiah to Malachi (Old Testament), Revelation (New Testament).

Or, compare the Pentateuch, that seed-

plot of all revelation, and the New Testament:

Genesis, and the *Four Gospels.*
The Great Foundations.
Exodus, and the *Acts.*
The Deliverance and Constitution of the Elect People.
Leviticus, and the *Pauline Epistles.*
The Believer's Standing and State.
Separation and Holiness unto the Lord.
Numbers, and the *Catholic Epistles.*
The Wilderness Journey of God's People.
Trial and Suffering.
Deuteronomy, and *Revelation.*
Review and Consummation.

This surely is apt and striking, and is calculated to lead to the belief that God is as careful of form as of substance; that there are order and design in the arrangement of his words as well as of his works.

We do not wish to lay undue emphasis upon the structural unity of the Bible, or to convey the impression that this balance of parts is a thing of any vital importance, but only that it enters into the revelation vouchsafed, and implies that that revelation is the product of one Mind.

(2) *There is Historical Unity.* There is not an isolated book in the whole collection; each is dependent on the one before it until we come to the primary fact, "In the beginning God." This is the more remarkable when we think of its many authors, and the period across which the writings were produced. This history is not the product of an editor who chose his contributors, mapped out the field, gave to each his period, and himself brought all into relation. Even in such enterprises as that unity is not always achieved. But here all are independent of one another, yet the result is a sublime story which moves on from period to period in most impressive eloquence from commencement to consummation.

Surely the explanation of this is to be found only in one direction. But further:

(3) *There is Prophetical Unity.* This is in fact a miracle, and prophecy is one of the greatest proofs of the divine origin and authority of the Bible. Not only do great numbers of Old Testament prophecies become fulfilments in the New Testament, but the New Testament itself is largely prophetic — much more so than is commonly thought, and its prophetic outlook is in complete perspective with that of the Old Testa-

ment. It is fuller and reaches further than that of the Old Testament, but the forelook is in the same direction. All these voices speak one great truth because all their utterances are the articulation of one great Mind. Daniel and John unfold one great plan, and reveal one great purpose, covering thousands of years, and whatever the critics may do with the authors they cannot change the character of their works. This miracle of prophecy is unimpeachable evidence that the Bible is the Word of God. Yet again —

(4) *There is Doctrinal Unity.* The countless contradictory doctrines held by men of our own generation should be enough to show how impossible it is for the unaided intellect to arrive at harmony of view about the great things — God, Life, the Soul, Sin, Destiny, and much besides. Yet in the Scriptures we find perfect harmony of teaching across a period of over fifteen centuries, and coming through men of great diversity of character and equipment. The apparent exceptions are due to faulty interpretations on our part, and do not exist in fact. It is not true that *Jesus* sets aside *Moses,* or that *Paul* contradicts *James,* though these things have been alleged in consequence of limited apprehension and mistaken interpretation.

The Bible does not teach Calvinism against Arminianism, or the latter against the former. It teaches *both.* They are different aspects of one great truth which finds expression in the sacrifice of Christ, on the one hand as propitiatory, and on the other as substitutionary. The sovereignty of God and human freewill are not contradictory, but complementary. The enlightened Christian will be a Calvinist on his knees and an Arminian on his feet. In all the parts of this amazing revelation there is harmony of doctrine, and divine inspiration is the only explanation. Yet once more,

(5) There is *Spiritual Unity.* The same sap pervades the whole of this tree of life; one spirit inhabits this body of truth; one energy moves from commencement to finish, and one redeeming purpose makes this library a single Book. The sap is the life of God, and the breath is the Spirit of God. The names and titles which the Scriptures bear are a declaration of its spiritual unity, as, for example, The Word of the Lord; The Oracles of God; The Word of Faith; The Word of Truth; The Word of Reconciliation; The Word of Life; The Word of Righteousness; The Faithful Word.

But the great evidence of the spiritual

unity of the Bible is to be found in its atmosphere and its altitude.

The air is rarer here than anywhere else; this is the most morally bracing climate in which we can live: it is stifling to iniquity, but health-giving to righteousness. The Bible is one long history of sin, but it nowhere sanctions or excuses it. To save the reputation of the saints is not an object here. Noah got drunk, Abram lied, David committed murder and adultery, and Peter swore; these are facts, and the Bible records them to save us from repeating them. On the other hand, Jesus says to the adulteress, "Neither do I condemn thee," and to the penitent thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." The pull of the Bible is always up. The moral standards of the two Testaments are not contradictory, but the New transcends the Old.

Here, then, is a wonderful thing, that between the two Testaments there is no contradiction of historical facts, no confusion of spiritual types, no contortion of prophetic outline, no collision of doctrinal statement, and no collapse of divine perspective: all is a sublime unity, and this can be accounted for only by the fact that these writings are the Word of God.

Let us recall the thread of our argument. In showing that the Bible claims to be the Word of God, we have examined, first, the Old Testament — its witness to itself, and the New Testament's witness to it. We are now examining the New Testament. Here, also, the witness is twofold,— first, that which the Old bears to the New; second, that which the New bears to itself. Of the former of these we have already considered the evidence of the unity of the Testaments; and we must now look briefly at the evidence derived from the presence of

2. *The Old Testament in the New.* If the claim of the Old Testament to be the Word of God is valid, the New Testament must share that distinction at least to the extent that the Old is in the New. Look then, summarily, at

(1) *The Range of the References.* By "References" let us understand quotations and allusions. Of the former, it has been reckoned there are 263; and these, drawn from all over the Old Testament, are found all over the New.

Dr. S. H. Brooks affirms that Genesis is quoted 19 times in 9 New Testament books; Exodus, 24 times in 12 New Testament books; Leviticus, 12 times in 9 New Testa-

ment books; Numbers is quoted or alluded to in 9 New Testament books; Deuteronomy, 26 times in 13 New Testament books; the Psalms, 59 times in 12 New Testament books; Isaiah, 50 times in 11 New Testament books; Proverbs, 6 times in 6 New Testament books; and Zechariah, 6 times in 4 New Testament books. But to these we have to add about 376 allusions, more or less distinct. It is evident, therefore, that the New Testament is saturated with the Old. Indeed, it is not too much to say that if all references to the Old Testament were eliminated, there would be comparatively little left.

Stephen's speech is an Old Testament "mosaic." The Epistle to the Hebrews and the Jewish portions of the Roman Epistle are entirely dependent on the Old Testament; and Professor Milligan, writing of the Revelation, says, "It may be doubted whether it contains a single figure not drawn from the Old Testament, or a single complete sentence not more or less built up of materials brought from the same source." We have already said that out of the total number of 404 verses in this book about 265 verses contain Old Testament language, and about 550 references are made to Old Testament passages.

The fact of and extent to which the Old Testament is in the New needs no further illustration. But the value of this for our present purpose depends upon

(2) *The Use of the References.* Does the New Testament quote the Old to approve or discredit, to endorse or deny it? Dr. Girdlestone says, "The more one studies the use of the Old Testament in the New, the more will one be struck with the fact that all New Testament writers use the Old Testament in the same way"; and what way that is we may judge from 2 Timothy 3: 15-17.

Sometimes the quotations are from the Hebrew, mostly from the Septuagint, and sometimes from neither, but in no case is the reference made for the purpose of correction or denial, but only for confirmation and expansion.

Sometimes the references are general, and sometimes particular; sometimes whole books are referred to as "the Scriptures," and sometimes the whole of the Old Testament is referred to in this way; but everywhere the writers assume that they are referring to the Word of God.

This absorption of the Old Testament gives character to the New, and is a valuable

part of the evidence of its inspiration. But let us look now at

(B) *The New Testament's Witness to Itself.* What evidence is there on this side that the Writings are of divine origin and authority? what are the character and significance of these twenty-seven books, ascertainable by the study of them and comparison of them with religious writings of the period immediately following? The best answer to those questions would require more time and space than are at present at our disposal; yet we venture to offer an answer in brief outline, looking first at the external, and then at the internal, evidence.

1. *The External Evidence.* Two things here claim our attention, and first, just a word about

(1) *The Canon of the New Testament.* By "Canon" we understand either that which measures or that which is measured; either that which rules or that which is ruled. The word occurs in the New Testament five times, two of which references speak of "walking according to a *rule*" which has been established (Gal. 6:16; Phil. 3:16). The word may have come to be applied to these Scriptures in one of two ways, either by viewing them "as containing the

authoritative *Rule* by which human thought and life are to be moulded; or, by viewing these Writings as *ruled,* that is, declared by the Church, after ages of doubt and debate, to be of divine inspiration. In any case, we know that by the end of the fourth century the books which make our New Testament were universally acknowledged to be Holy Scripture. Other books within that period made pretentious claims, but the great test was apostolicity, and this established, there was no longer any question as to recognition. These twenty-seven books, since the completion of the Canon, have for over fifteen centuries been regarded as a true part of God's great Book of Scriptures. It is impossible to doubt that during those early centuries the divine Spirit quickened the discernment and directed the judgment of his people, leading them to recognize, on substantial evidence, what was, and what was not, divinely inspired.

This testimony must not be set aside, for "There is the same *kind* of evidence that the books of the New Testament are of apostolic origin as that the works of Xenophon, Cicero, or Plutarch proceeded from the authors whose names they bear."

Furthermore, the immense number of quo-

tations made from the New Testament by the early Christian writers is witness to the growing consciousness that these were of inspired authority; indeed, they were quoted or alluded to as of equal authority with the Old Testament Scriptures. Dean Burgon, in his great index of patristic quotations, discovered 22,534 in the writings alone of Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen; and these quotations are from the Gospels, Acts, the Pauline and Catholic Epistles, and the Apocalypse.

The late Professor Johnstone has shown in his "Principles of Evidence in Critical Enquiry" that by the beginning of the third century of our era there would be approximately 2,000,000 Christians in the world, and that the belief of such writers as Irenæus, or Clement, or Tertullian, that the New Testament writings were of divine authority was the view of the Church throughout the world at that time.

This evidence is not new, but it should be known that it is still valid.

Another part of the external evidence that the New Testament is divinely inspired is to be found in

(2) *The Post-Apostolic Writings.* Between the canonical books and even the best

of the uncanonical there is a distinction which impressively reveals the limits of the unaided Christian intellect and imagination.

Canon Bernard's Bampton Lectures should be read here. He discusses the distinction between the apostolic period and subsequent periods of church history, and inquires into what constitutes the distinction. The result is somewhat as follows: That whereas the apostolic period is part of the history of the communication of truth by God, and of the apprehension of it by man, the post-apostolic periods are parts of the history only of the apprehension of truth by man; in other words, the apostolic period was the last of communication and the first of apprehension. That it was the last of communication is proved by the fact that the apprehension of truth on the part of the Church throughout this age has been an apprehension of what the evangelists and apostles wrote, and not of what any person wrote after the close of that period. "No later communications from heaven are supposed or alleged." All definitions, decrees, and creeds have these writings and these *only* for their warrant and substance. It was not a new communication that was given in the time of Athanasius, Augustine, or Luther, but a new apprehen-

sion and a reaffirmation of a former communication.

The matter may be summarized in this way:

Writings of the Evangelists.	Writings of the Apostles.	Writings of the Fathers.
Period of Communication Only.	Period of Communication and Apprehension.	Period of Apprehension Only.
Pre-Apostolic.	Apostolic.	Post-Apostolic.

From this diagram the situation will be clearly seen. But in addition to that important fact, it has always been recognized, and recognized by the apostolic Fathers themselves, that the writings of the sub-apostolic age are incomparably inferior to the writings of the New Testament, though they have many beauties of a distinct interest.

These facts together constitute strong external evidence that the New Testament writings are the Word of God. We shall now proceed to

2. *The Internal Evidence.* And first of all let us examine

(1) *The Testimony of Christ.* Perhaps

it is not too much to say that the testimony which is inclusive and convincing is that of

(*a*) *His Self-Consciousness.* Who did Jesus believe and declare that he was? If his witness be accepted, nothing remains to be said on the subject of these articles, for his claim carries with it the whole Bible. We are so familiar, in a way, with our Authorized text that we are not mastered by such statements as:

"Come unto *me* . . . all . . . and *I* will give you rest";

"Before Abraham was *I am*";

"I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life";

And that first recorded utterance:

"Did ye not know that in the *affairs* [or, *house*] of my Father it behooves me to be?"

It is difficult and perhaps impossible to say when Jesus became conscious of who he was, but that consciousness was certainly his at twelve years of age, and Dean Farrar, in a note on Luke 2:49, in the Cambridge Greek Testament, says that "did ye not know?" was designed to "recall their fading memory of who he was." If that be so, his God-consciousness awakened before his experience at Jerusalem.

But the fact to be marked for our

present purpose is that Jesus believed that he was God, and declared it, alike by his life, his teaching, his Passion, and subsequent events. That fact, let me repeat, has a bearing on all relative claims that is simply determinative. Examine one or two of these, as, for example,

(*b*) *His Attitude Toward the Old Testament.* This has already been examined, and is referred to again now only that what he said about it may be read in the light which breaks from the fact that the Speaker was divine. Those who challenge the inspiration and authority of the Old Testament Scriptures are up against the deity of Christ. Then there is,

(*c*) *His Claim for His Preaching.* We are all familiar with the Kenosis controversy, and I have only one object in introducing it here; namely, to affirm that whatever that mysterious and altogether blessed revelation may point to, it certainly could never mean that he so "emptied" himself that he was liable to "mistakes about fact, even in so great a matter as the nature of the Old Testament Scriptures." The matter of *knowledge* is not in view at all in the context, but Christ's willingness to become, and his becoming, the truly human Bondservant of the Father.

But even suppose we admitted (which we do not) that he was as liable to misread the Old Testament writings as were the Jews of his day, such error cannot be ascribed to his teaching, which, he expressly and often affirms, he received from his Father.

"My doctrine is not mine, but his who sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

"As my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."

"I have not spoken *from* myself; but the Father who sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak."

"Even as the Father said unto me, so I speak."

Any one who dares to challenge the teaching of Jesus must take the full responsibility of directly challenging the truthfulness of God.

Let us now take one more step in pursuit of the evidence we want, and look at what may be called

(*d*) *His Cryptic Prophecy.* I refer to two verses in the upper room discourse (John 14:25; 16:13): "The Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach

you all things, and *will bring to your remembrance all things which I said unto you.*"

"When he the Spirit of Truth may have come, *he will guide you into all the truth,* for he will not speak from himself, but whatsoever he may hear he will speak, and *the things coming he will announce to you.*"

It is to the three sentences in italics that I would call your attention:

He promised his disciples an aided memory as they went forth to preach the Gospel, and out of that oral Gospel our *four records* have come.

He promised that the Spirit would guide his disciples into all the truth; not "into all truth," but "the truth," pointing to a field of truth of which he himself was the substance.

When was that promise fulfilled? *Primarily* when he inspired the apostles to write the *epistles,* each of which presents some definite aspect of "the truth" concerning Christ and Christianity; and *progressively,* as he, through these ages, has led believers into an ever deeper understanding of what was then written.

He promised that the Spirit would announce to them "things to come." And the last book in the New Testament begins with the words: "Revelation of Jesus Christ which

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God gave to him to shew to his bondmen what things must take place shortly."

There is, therefore, in these three declarations a veiled promise of what we now have and know as the New Testament, distinguished in its parts as history, doctrine, and Apocalypse, and answering to the great divisions of the Old Testament — history, wisdom, and prophecy. Christ, therefore, set his *imprimatur* upon the whole as yet unwritten New Testament, as afterwards in resurrection life he set his seal upon the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures as we now possess them, neither more nor less. He then endorsed the whole Bible, though at that time not a line of the second part was written.

Let these things be taken together — Christ's Self-Consciousness, his Attitude Toward the Old Testament, his Claim for his Teaching, and his Foredraft of the New Testament — and it must be felt that this is cumulative evidence, more than enough, that the New Testament writings are the Word of God.

Yet this is by no means the only evidence. There is, in addition,

(2) *The Apostolic Consciousness.* If the claims which the apostles themselves

make have any meaning or value, they are conclusive evidence that their writings are Holy Scripture. One or two examples will suffice:

(*a*) *Paul* says: "We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things freely given to us of God."

"Which things also *we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth,* comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor. 2: 12, 13).

If that utterance signifies anything at all, it is a definite claim to an inspiration which extends to the "words" employed in communicating divine truth; that is, to what is called verbal inspiration. Such an idea is to-day ridiculed by the disciples of the "new knowledge," but no research in which scholars may engage, and no enlargement of the field of positive knowledge can in any way alter primary facts. Let us rejoice in the stores of information bearing on the New Testament which modern scholarship has brought to us, but when that learning presumes to modify or deny the claims of these writings for themselves, then we must part company.

But hear Paul again: "If any man think

himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor. 14:37).

The proof that one is "a prophet, or spiritual," is this, that acknowledgment is made that the authority of Christ is continued in his apostle. That claim is strong, but what follows is stronger: "But if any one is ignorant [of this] he is ignored."

Professor Findlay's remark on this is, "The professor of divine knowledge who does not discern Paul's inspiration proves his ignorance; his character as prophet, or 'spiritual,' is not recognized, since he does not recognize the Apostle's character" (Expositor's Greek Testament, p. 916).

It is to be feared that a great deal of modern scholarship must stand condemned at that bar, and for the reason that, not content to discover facts, it has attempted to create them, and that often by way of denial of the real facts.

But Paul is firm and plain: "When ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, *the word of God,* which effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Thess. 2:13).

He therefore distinctly asserts that when he made known the doctrines contained in his writings, he and his words were directly under the control of the Spirit of God. And what he claimed, the other apostles claimed.

(*b*) *Peter* writes: "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour" (2 Pet. 3:2).

There he places the apostolic writings on a level with the Old Testament prophetic writings, of which latter he had already said: "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (chap. 1).

And he further classes the Pauline writings with "the other Scriptures" as of equal authority (2 Peter 3:15, 16). Hear also the claim of

(*c*) *John.* "We are of God; he that knows God hears us; he that is not of God, hears not us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error" (1 John 4:6).

Let any man outside of the apostolic circle make such a statement as that, and he at once loses all claim to our attention and respect. But such utterances on the lips of Paul and Peter and John do not shock us, because the teaching to which they point, and for which

they make the claim, bears abundant evidence that it originates not in man, but in God. This compels us to say just a word upon

(3) *The Character of the Teaching.* On this subject alone libraries have been written, and might be written, and only by prolonged and painstaking study can any one do more than begin to apprehend the wealth and wonder of the apostolic teaching. Very few, if any, can go deeply into the whole of these writings, but sink a shaft where you will, you will strike veins of purest gold.

In profoundness, comprehensiveness, sublimity, and power there is nothing in any or all the literatures of the world together to compare with these writings. That no men before the apostolic period wrote like that, and that none since have written so, is evidence in itself that men of that period could not have written as they did except under the immediate direction of the Spirit of God.

The individuality of the writers is everywhere clearly marked, so well so that it has been claimed that each has his own grammar (A. Souter, though Winer is horrified at that idea); yet, this notwithstanding, they together present a body of truth which the most brilliant of men, unaided, could never have thought out of themselves; and even

had they been able to do so, it would have been impossible to harmonize their teaching. But in these writings are found heavenly instruction and heavenly harmony, to be accounted for only on the hypothesis that they have a heavenly origin.

No classics are treated as the Church has from the beginning found it necessary to treat the sacred writings in order to arrive at their true meaning and value; namely, by way of examination of the teaching, sentence by sentence, and word by word. What does such a treatment imply, if not that the thought is so expressed that the whole import of it in any given place may depend upon a tense, a number, a case, or a preposition. Bishop Westcott once said in a lecture, "The whole force of the revelation in the Bible is contained just in two letters — the Greek preposition for 'in.'" That is a strong and striking pronouncement, but it was made by one who was competent to speak on the subject. Abundant evidence of the amazing precision with which words are used everywhere and always in the New Testament may be found in any of our best Greek grammars of the New Testament, Winer's and Robertson's, to name no others. I am tempted to give a hundred illustrations at random, but

must resist. This, however, let me say, that the teaching of the New Testament is unmistakably divine in its nature and origin, and is communicated in words which, not only in themselves were the best in the language to communicate such thoughts, but which became enriched by being used for such a purpose; for, as Dr. A. T. Robertson says, "The Christian spirit put a new flavor into this vernacular Κοινῆ and lifted it to a new elevation of thought and dignity of style that enrich and glorify the language. This new and victorious spirit, which seized the best in Jew and Greek, knew how to use the Greek language with freedom and power" (Greek Grammar, p. 113).

To sum up, then. The evidence that the New Testament Scriptures are the Word of God is witnessed to by the Old Testament along at least two lines: First, that of the unity which exists between the two Testaments, a unity which is fivefold—structural, historical, prophetical, doctrinal, and spiritual; and second, that of the range and use of the Old Testament in the New, confirming, illuminating, and amplifying.

It is also witnessed to by the New Testament itself; and the evidence is both external and internal. External evidence is found in

the history of the Canon, and by a comparison of the apostolic with the sub-apostolic writings.

Internal evidence is found in the testimony of Christ, the apostolic consciousness, and in the character of the teaching.

These are by no means inclusive or exhaustive evidences, but are sufficient to furnish an ample and firm ground for faith.

Let this witness be added to what preceded,— that *the Bible seems to be the Word of God*; and these two added to what is to follow, that *the Bible proves to be the Word of God,* and for all whose judgments are not grievously warped the matter will be placed forever beyond question.

III. IT PROVES TO BE

One of the proofs that the Bible is not "like any other book" is that it has done what no other book has ever done, or ever could do. In the "Dialogues" of Socrates, in the "Republic" of Plato, in the "Analects" of Confucius, in the "Vedas" of the Brahmins, in the "Zend Avesta" of the Parsees, and even in the "Koran," there are the strains of a noble and powerful morality, yet

these and other works of a like order must forever be sharply distinguished from what is Christian in three tremendous ways: in respect of the writers, in respect of the writings, and in respect of the results. These teachers may be grouped together, but the name of Christ must not appear in the list, not even at the top. The contrasts overwhelm the comparisons. They stand on one side, and he on the other, not so much in the way of ignorance and knowledge as by reason of their differing qualities of character. It has been truly and eloquently said, "Socrates was great and noble and wise, and his death is one of the most moving scenes of ancient history; let us not breathe one word against that holy and high-souled sage — but the truth is dearer to us even than Socrates; and when we think of Socrates conversing with Theodota, or feasting with Agathon, when we remember the mingled leniency and coarseness with which he spoke of the sins of Critias; when we recall his cold and almost impatient dismissal of his wife and children at his hour of approaching death, and then, with bowed head, think of Him who talked by the well-side with the woman of Samaria, or stood alone by that guilty adulteress as she sobbed upon the tem-

ple floor; or who, as he hung upon the cross between the thieves, chose out the tenderest-hearted of his disciples, and, in the midst of his anguish, said to his mother, *'Woman, behold thy son,'*— then indeed, if our spiritual sense be not utterly blunt and dead, we may see how infinite is the gulf which separates the teacher of Athens from the Son of God."

This great gulf lies not only between these teachers and Christ, but also between the Christian writings and theirs, alike in themselves and in what they have accomplished and are able to accomplish. In "Seekers After God" we read, "The morality of Paganism was, on its own confession, insufficient. It was tentative where Christianity was authoritative. It was dim and partial where Christianity is bright and complete; it was inadequate to rouse the sluggish carelessness of mankind where Christianity came with an impartial and awakening power; it gives only a rule where Christianity supplies a principle; and even where its teachings were absolutely identical with those of Scripture, it failed to ratify them with a sufficient sanction; it failed to announce them with the same powerful and contagious ardor; it failed to furnish any absolutely faultless and vivid

example of their practise; it failed to inspire them with an irresistible motive; it failed to support them with a powerful comfort under the difficulties which were sure to be encountered in the aim after a consistent and holy life." In other words, Pagan morality was like gathered blossoms stuck in the careless garden of a child, looking lovely for a time, but because they had no root soon withering away. But over against this the Christian writings have proved themselves to be living, active, efficacious, and self-renewing. The triumphs of the Bible are to be seen in differing forms and degrees in the soul, in society, and in the race. Let us, for our present purpose, call two witnesses, — the Individual and Christianity.

Regarding the former of these, we shall see that the individual bears a threefold witness to the Bible: first, to its saving and keeping virtue; second, to its compelling and enabling power; and third, to its inherent value and charm.

And, considering the latter of these two witnesses, we shall bring under rapid review the sources, progress, and influence of Christianity.

1. The Witness of the Individual to the Bible. Never can all that the Bible

has done for the individual soul be put on record, so great is the volume of testimony, but a slight knowledge of its triumphs in this direction will suffice to prove that it is indeed the Word of God, "alive and powerful."

To begin with, how abundant is the testimony borne to

(1) *The Saving and Keeping Virtue of the Bible.* As illustrative of this, let us take the witness of two men widely separated in time, diverse in temperament, and altogether distinct in their tasks; namely, Aurelius Augustine, A.D. 354-430, and Charles Haddon Spurgeon, A.D. 1834-1892. These were separated from each other in time by 1400 years, the one exercising his unique ministry from Hippo on the north coast of Africa; the other from London, England; the one as a Christian writer and ecclesiastic, wielding an influence second only to that of the apostles, an influence which diffused itself throughout the whole of Western Christendom; and the other as a preacher of the Gospel ranking easily as one of the greatest the world has ever known. How came these men to be what they were and to do what they did? Let their stories briefly be told.

Both these men had godly mothers who never ceased to pray for them, Spurgeon having the advantage of Augustine in that he had also a devout father. Augustine in youth was wild and wicked, given over to licentious indulgences; but Spurgeon was from earliest days a good boy, with a deeply religious inclination. Both alike were painfully alive to the fact that they were sinners, and passed through a period, the one longer and the other shorter, of vain endeavor and search for life and peace. Both were brought to the knowledge of Christ by a single text of Scripture, instrumentally in Augustine's case by a voice, as of a boy or girl, I know not, chanting and oft repeating, "Take up and read; take up and read"; and in Spurgeon's case by the simple message of an unknown Primitive Methodist preacher; the one at Milan, and the other at Colchester.

These were the texts which wrought the mighty change:

"Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and in wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh."

Augustine says: "No further would I read; nor needed I; for instantly at the end

of this sentence, by a light as it were of serenity infused into my heart, all the darkness of doubt vanished away."

In Spurgeon's case the text was:

"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."

"Setting his eyes upon me as if he knew all my heart," says Spurgeon, "the preacher said, 'Young man, you are in trouble.' Well, I was, sure enough. Says he, 'You will never get out of it unless you look to Christ.' And then, lifting up his hands, he cried out, as only a Primitive Methodist could do, 'Look, look, look!' I saw at once the way of salvation. Oh, how I did leap for joy at that moment! I know not what else he said. I was so possessed with that one thought. I had been waiting to do fifty things, but when I heard this word, 'Look,' what a charming word it seemed to me! I looked until I could have almost looked my eyes away; and in heaven I will look on still in my joy unutterable."

To these testimonies to the saving power of the Gospel might be added countless thousands through all the ages, and such books as "Broken Earthenware" and "Down in Water Street" are evidence enough that the Word

of God is as potent as ever to work the miracle of miracles.

It will not even be pretended that any book in the world, or all the books in the world put together, have wrought such vast and beneficent conversions — such deliverances from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God — as have been and are day by day being wrought by the voice of God speaking to us from the Holy Scriptures. Is not this single fact sufficient to prove their unique preciousness, their transcendent supremacy?"

It is life-giving because it is alive, and it is alive because it is, as no other book is, the Word of God.

But beyond this there is unnumbered individual testimony to

(2) *The Compelling and Enabling Power of the Bible.* This witness is co-extensive with the history of the Church, and if we introduce two names at this point, it is only a selection at random as illustrative of the great throng before and after them who have found the Bible, in life and service, to be compelling and enabling.

Martin Luther (1483-1555) will readily be voted one of the outstanding personalities of Christian history. A miner's son, he

rose to a place of power and eminence which makes his influence a thing felt to this day. Professor Walker of Yale speaks of him as "one of the few men of whom it may be said that the history of the world was profoundly altered by his work. Not a great scholar, an organizer, or a politician, he moved men by the power of a profound religious experience, resulting in unshakable trust in God, and in direct, immediate, and personal relation to Him, which brought a confident salvation, that left no room for the elaborate hierachical and sacramental strictures of the Middle Ages."

What was it that made this Erfurt monk so mighty a power? We are told that as he ascended the Santa Scala staircase at Rome on his knees, and when but half-way up, there burst upon his soul, like the rush of an avalanche, the text, "The just shall live by faith."

And thenceforth, in his own personal experience, the sum of the Gospel was the forgiveness of sins and absolute dependence on the Word of God. From that so sudden and complete a deliverance came the bright and blissful Reformation in which "the sweet odor of the returning Gospel of Christ has embalmed men's souls in the fragrancy of

heaven," and emancipated millions from Egyptian darkness.

For our second witness to the compelling and enabling power of the Bible, we come down two and a half centuries, to David Livingstone. We turn from Europe to Africa, and from a great reformer to a world-famous traveler and missionary. Perhaps the most impressive testimony to this heroic soul is that of Henry M. Stanley. He said:

"In 1871 I went to Africa as prejudiced as the biggest atheist in London. But there came for me a long time for reflection. I was out there, away from a worldly world. I saw a solitary old man there, and asked 'Why on earth does he stop here? Is he cracked, or what? What is it that inspires him?' For months after we met I simply found myself listening to him, wondering at him, as he carried out all that was said in the Bible: 'Leave all that ye have and follow me.' But little by little his sympathy became contagious. Seeing his piety, his gentleness, his zeal, his earnestness, and how quietly he did his duty, I was converted by him, though he had not tried to do it."

That heroic soul on May 4th, 1873, was found dead on his knees at Chitambos vil-

lage of Ilala, on the south of Lake Bangweolo, and two faithful Africans, whom he had rescued from slavery, carried his body on their shoulders three hundred miles to Zanzibar, whence it was brought to England. He was buried at Westminster Abbey, amid the tears of the noble and the great. Truly, it was the love of Christ that constrained him, and his love of the Bible that enabled him; and as part result of his sacrificial service Africans have been given the Word of God in at least fourteen languages.

These examples of courage and sacrifice but reflect the story of a multitude. The time would fail me to tell of those who endured rack and prison and flame and sword for the sake of Christ and his Word. Said Cyprian: "They stood safe, stronger than their conquerors; the beaten and lacerated members conquered the beating and lacerating hooks." Such was their tremendous spirit through that long period of legalized and almost unbroken persecution, which reached from Nero to Diocletian.

Ignatius, the venerable bishop of Antioch, was sent to Rome to be devoured of beasts, on the way writing seven of his epistles. Justin was scourged and beheaded because he refused to sacrifice to the gods. When the

aged Polycarp was bidden, "Swear by Cæsar's fortune and revile Christ," he replied, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he never did me wrong; how then can I revile my King and my Saviour?" The infuriated crowd demanded that he should be burned. "The demand was complied with, and the populace in their rage soon collected from the baths and workshops logs and faggots for the pile. The old man ungirded himself, laid aside his garments, and took his place in the midst of the fuel, and when they would have secured him with nails to the stake, said, "Let me remain as I am, for he that has enabled me to brave the fire will so strengthen me that, without your fastening me with nails, I shall, unmoved, endure its fierceness." After he had offered a short but beautiful prayer, the fire was kindled, but a high wind drove the flames to one side, so that he was roasted rather than burned, and the executioner was ordered to dispatch him with a sword. On his striking him with it so great a quantity of blood flowed from the wound as to quench the flames, which were, however, resuscitated, in order to consume his lifeless body.

Glorious was the witness of men, young and old, but not less glorious was the con-

fession of women of differing age and station.

Blandina, a servant girl, amid horrible torture held firmly by the testimony of the Gospel.

Perpetua, a youthful matron of gentle birth, clasping an infant to her breast, calmly withstood the tears and entreaties of her aged father. When the governor bade her, "Have pity on thy father's gray hairs, have pity on thy helpless child, offer sacrifices for the welfare of the Emperor," she answered, "That I cannot do." "Art thou a Christian?" he asked. "Yes," she replied, "I am a Christian."

Felicitas, the female slave, after her trial was seized with the pangs of maternity. The jailor said to her, "If thy present sufferings are so great, what wilt thou do when thou art thrown to the wild beasts? This thou didst not consider when thou refusedst to sacrifice." She answered, "I now suffer *myself* all that I suffer; but then there will be *Another* who will suffer for me, because I suffer for him." So the lady and the slave went together to the amphitheater, and, before the stroke which ended their sufferings, exchanged the last kiss of Christian love.

Nor did loyalty to Christ and his Gospel

die with the dying of these heroes. There has been an aristocracy of sufferers for the truth through all the centuries, such as the Lollards, the Reformers, the Puritans, the Pilgrim Fathers, and the Covenanters, and did occasion again require such testimony, without doubt it would be forthcoming. The martyr-spirit is not dead, just because the Word of God has not lost its compelling and enabling power over the souls of men, and it is still true that the more a man makes of the Bible the more it will make of him.

The late Rev. Wm. Muir has truly said: "It is the Bible that has been aback of all civilizing, evangelizing, and reviving movements. From it has come the inspiration which has sent out the most successful missionaries and evangelists to gather in the lost; and no evangelical agency can expect to prosper unless it keeps the Bible in the very forefront. "Whether we think," he says, "of the great revival of heart religion which we call the Reformation, or of the Puritan Revival which kept the fire burning on the altar in our land when the Counter-Reformation was doing deadly work everywhere else; or of the Methodist Revival either in its earlier phases, when so many were won for Christ, or in its later phases, when the Primi-

tives came to be such a blessing to the villages of England — we always find that the good work gathered round the Bible, and especially round the English Bible.

"It is through its pages that both preparation and call have come to those whom God has used most, alike in the homelands and in the regions beyond. Not otherwise can there be an adequate sense of human need, or of the fullness of the divine preparation for it. Not otherwise can men see the corroding, corrupting power of sin in the light of the Cross. Not otherwise can those who discover something of the immensity of their debt to Christ on the Cross come under the dominion of his constraining love. Not otherwise is that compassion for souls, that yearning pity for the weary and heavy-laden begotten, which makes men and women Christlike in their endeavors to spread the blessing and share the light."

But, further individual testimony is borne to

(3) *The Inherent Charm and Value of the Bible.* The power of this wonderful Book has been felt and witnessed to in all ages and countries by persons of the most diverse rank, accomplishment, and occupation, the learned and the ignorant, the rich and the poor,

princes and peasants, statesmen and salesmen, writers and warriors, artists and artisans, sculptors and shepherds, musicians and merchants, poets and planters. Men as widely separated by predilection and persuasion as Renan and Faber, Rousseau and Newman, Hooker and Theodore Parker, Huxley and Browning, Heine and Gladstone, Wesley and Goethe, Wilberforce and Kuenen, have poured their impassioned eulogies upon the Bible for its winsome tenderness, its awful directness, its searching power, its amazing pathos, its wonderful insight, its literary charm, and its universal reach. "What a Book!" exclaimed Heine; "vast and wide as the world! rooted in the abysses of creation, and towering up beyond the blue secrets of heaven! Sunrise and sunset, birth and death, promise and fulfilment, the whole drama of humanity are all in this Book!"

And Coleridge said, "In the Bible there is more that finds me than I have experienced in all other books put together: the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being; and whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit."

Volumes might be written on the Bible, viewed from this standpoint, but, enough.

This is "beyond all other books the Book of the world. Other books are for special times or separate races; this Book has been dear in every age to men of all races. Other books are for the poor or for the rich; this Book regards poor and rich alike, not under the inch-high differences of wealth and rank, but as heirs alike of the common mysteries of life and death, of redemption and immortality. Other books are for the mature or the youthful; this Book alone neither wearies the aged nor repels the young. Other books are only for the learned, or only for the ignorant; this Book, in the sweetest and simplest elements of its revelation, is as dear to the philosopher as to the negro's child. In it mind speaks to mind, and heart to heart, and soul to soul."

In closing, something must be said about a larger aspect of the subject; namely

2. The Witness of Christianity to the Bible.—Here, briefly, let us consider the sources, the progress, and the influence of Christianity.

(1) *The Sources of Christianity.* These, it may be said, are threefold:

(*a*) *Christ is the Origination of Christianity.* Professor Hugh Mackintosh has defined Christianity as "the religion which

holds as its fundamental tenet that in the historic person, Jesus of Nazareth, God has been perfectly revealed as Father." Christianity is not a church, not a creed, not a ritual, not a tradition, and we must also say, not a book. *Christianity is Christ,* the revelation of God as Life, Light, and Love, first in the historic and personal Christ, and then in the historic and mystical Christ. Christianity essentially is Christ, and that leads me to say that

(*b*) *The Church is the Articulation of Christianity.* Reference has just been made to the historic and mystical Christ, by which we mean the living Head in heaven, and his living members on earth. As the head functions through the body, so the absent, living Lord articulates through his Church. She is, or should be, the expression and reflection here on earth of him. Yet how has the Church through these ages been able to know him that she might love and serve him? Some one will say, "By the indwelling and illuminating Holy Spirit." True, but that only leads to a further question,—How have Christians been able these nearly two thousand years to know what was of and from the Holy Spirit, and what was not? Has every one been a law to himself in this

matter so vital, or is there any court of appeal, any body and standard of truth, by which the claims to one's having received illumination may be brought and tested? The answer to that must be—

(*c*) *The Bible is the Definition of Christianity.* Perhaps it will be claimed that *experience* is that definition. But we ask at once, Whose? When one thinks of the endless variety of religious experience and belief in the world at any given time, we see how hopeless would be the quest of the truth, unless, out of ourselves, there were a revelation from God. But that revelation we have in the Bible, or, more strictly, the Bible is the inspired record of that revelation. "In sacred Scripture," says an old Confession, "the Universal Church has a most full exposition of whatsoever pertains both to saving faith and to the right molding of the life which is pleasing to God"; and Protestantism affirms that it is perfect in its authority, sufficiency, perspicuity, and efficacy.

The Lutheran, the Reformed, and the Armenian Churches unite in the declaration that "Christianity is a divine revelation communicated to mankind through Christ, the saving truths of which must be derived from the Bible alone"; the Romish and Greek

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Churches add tradition to the Bible; but the Westminster Doctrine is most emphatic against any subtraction or addition when it says, "The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church, but wholly upon God, the Author thereof; and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God."

The facts concerning the historic Christ, not to speak of the apostolic interpretation of those facts under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, would long ago have been forgotten, or else so overlaid by the accretions of superstition as to be unrecognizable, had not those facts and interpretations early found fixity as in the Bible.

But let us pass from the sources, to look for a moment at

(2) *The Progress of Christianity.* We have already touched upon

(*a*) *The Early Struggle.* Church historians speak of the first three centuries as the period of persecution, and how widespread and fierce that persecution was let the Catacombs witness, with their four million graves, according to a moderate calculation. How colossal were the powers arrayed against those first believers! All the odds,

judged from the standpoint of the world, were against that little company of "the Way," who dared to stand by conviction and principle in the face of Rome's authority and power. Yet this they did at the uttermost cost, and even gloried in their sufferings.

Christianity spent her first three centuries in one long, legalized, almost unbroken persecution, yet by their tremendous spirit they conquered their conquerors, and died only to live more gloriously. Neither Nero, Decius, nor Diocletian could quench their ardor, nor prison, rack, sword, nor shirt of flame compel them to deny their Lord. "The nearer I am to the sword," said Ignatius, "the nearer to God."

But side by side with these persecutions came

(*b*) *The Increasing Recognition* of Christianity. This was widespread, as the Catacombs show; but it was not, as Gibbon sneeringly affirmed, a recognition on the part "almost entirely of the dregs of the populace, of peasants and mechanics, of boys and women, of beggars and slaves." Professor Ramsay has said that Christianity "spread first among the educated more rapidly than among the uneducated"; and certain it is that the divine power drew to it men of all classes

of society from the beginning, and often the persons in higher station were the first to come, and through their example brought others. The heathen themselves became profoundly alarmed at the progress of Christianity. "Men cry out," says Tertullian, "that the State is besieged; the Christians are in the fields, in the forts, in the islands; they mourn, as for a loss, that every sex, age, condition, and even rank, is going over to this sect."

The advance of Christianity was not only vertical, but lateral, as Orr would say, and we have it from Justin Martyr that "there is not one single race of men, whether barbarians, or Greeks, or whatever they may be called, nomads, or vagrants, or herdsmen dwelling in tents, among whom prayers and giving of thanks are not offered, through the name of the Crucified Jesus." Yet the testimony of the Catacombs is not only to the multitude who believed, — they also bear witness by their elegance, refinement, and construction and elaboration of decoration, that large numbers of these were of the wealthier class.

And so, out of the struggle, and by way of the recognition of Christianity, came

(*c*) *The Final Triumph.* How great that

triumph was they only can know who have paid some attention to the history of that period. Farrar, in the "Witness of History to Christ," says:

"Nothing could have appeared more deplorable than the weakness of the new religion. It numbered but a handful of timid followers, of whom the boldest had denied his Lord with blasphemy, and the most devoted had forsaken him and fled. They were poor, they were ignorant, they were helpless. They could not claim a single synagogue, or a single sword. If they spoke their own language, it bewrayed them by its mongrel dialect; if they spoke the current Greek, it was despised as a miserable *patois*. And of their two doctrines—the Crucifixion and the Resurrection—the one inspired indignant horror, and the other unbounded scorn. But when they were weak, then were they strong. They had been consecrated for their mighty work by no earthly Chrism; they had been baptized by the Holy Ghost and with fire; each faithless heart had been dilated with celestial courage: each lowly forehead mitred with Pentecostal flame."

It was because of this, that at the end of the ten years' persecution, when the enemies of Christ supposed that they had extirpated

his worship forever, multitudes were ready to bow before the standard of the Cross. Gibbon, in a well-known passage, assigns five reasons for this wonderful and irresistible triumph of Christianity:

"1. The inflexible and, if we may use the expression, the intolerant zeal of the Christians, derived, it is true, from the Jewish religion, but purified from the narrow and unsocial spirit which, instead of inviting, had deterred the Gentile from embracing the law of Moses.

"2. The doctrine of a future life, improved by every additional circumstance which could give weight and efficacy to that important truth.

"3. The miraculous powers ascribed to the primitive Church.

"4. The pure and austere morals of the Christians.

"5. The union and discipline of the Christian republic, which gradually formed an independent and increasing State in the heart of the Roman Empire."

With the exception, perhaps, of the third, let these reasons be admitted to the full, and coming from such a quarter the testimony is the mightier. It was the Man of Nazareth who had wrought the great change by which

"the Catacomb triumphed over the Grecian temple; the Cross of shame over the wine-cup and the Salian banquet, the song of the Siren, and the wreath of rose.

"These obscure sectaries — barbarians, Orientals, Jews, as they were — fought against the indignant world and won. 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts': by heroic endurance, by stainless innocence, by burning zeal, by inviolable truthfulness, by boundless love. The world's seductive ideals and intoxicating joys, the world's enchanting mythologies and dissolute religions, all fled before a cross of wood!"

So far we have been considering the progress of the Gospel during the first three or four centuries of our era, but that is only a part of the story, and this rapid survey would be obviously incomplete without a reference, however brief, to

(3) *The Influence of Christianity.* Many volumes could not exhaust this aspect of the subject, for Christianity has invaded every realm and left an indelible impress upon the individual, society, and the race.

But Christianity is the promulgation of a revelation and the expression of a life. That revelation is recorded in, and that life is

communicated through, the Scriptures, without which Christianity could not have survived. Therefore when we speak of the influence of Christianity, we have here in view more particularly the influence of that Book in which we find its sum and substance. Think, then, for a moment of

(*a*) *The Literary and Aesthetic Influence of the Bible.* The Bible is more than literature, but it certainly is literature, and that at its best; truly it has been and is an "Academy of Letters" in the land. Who can measure the influence of these Scriptures upon the best minds and the greatest writers of the world? Landor said that the Bible is "a Book which, to say nothing of its holiness or authority, contains more specimens of genius and taste than any other volume in existence." Froude said, "The Bible thoroughly known is a literature in itself . . . the rarest and richest in all departments of thought or imagination which exists." And Macaulay speaks of it as "that stupendous work, . . . a book, which, if everything else in our language should perish, would alone suffice to show the whole extent of its beauty and power."

It requires but a brief examination of the makers of our literature "to show that it is

not merely that Scripture is often quoted and alluded to, but that its words and images have entered into the very warp and woof of the cloth of gold which they have woven for the generations which follow after. To be ignorant of the Bible is to lack the key of the treasury alike in literature and grace."

J. R. Green, in speaking of the effects of the Bible on Puritan England, eloquently says:

"As a mere literary monument, the English Version of the Bible remains the noblest example of the English tongue, while its perpetual use made it from the instant of its appearance the standard of our language.

"It formed, we must repeat, the whole literature which was practically accessible to ordinary Englishmen; and when we recall the number of common phrases which we owe to great authors, the bits of Shakespeare, or Milton, or Dickens, or Thackeray, which unconsciously interweave themselves in our ordinary talk, we shall better understand the strange mosaic of Biblical words and phrases which colored English talk two hundred years ago.

"The mass of picturesque allusion and illustration which we borrow from a thousand books, our fathers were forced to borrow

from one; and the borrowing was the easier and the more natural that the range of the Hebrew literature fitted it for the expression of every phase of feeling. When Spenser poured forth his warmest love-notes in the 'Epithalamion,' he adopted the very words of the Psalmist, as he bade the gates open for the entrance of his bride. When Cromwell saw the mists break over the hills of Dunbar, he hailed the sun-burst with the cry of David: 'Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered. Like as the smoke vanisheth, so shalt thou drive them away.' Even to common minds this familiarity with grand poetic imagery in prophet and apocalypse gave a loftiness of ardor and expression that, with all its tendency to exaggeration and bombast, we may prefer to the slipshod vulgarisms of to-day."

But why multiply witnesses? It would be easy to quote from scores of master-minds, such as Augustine, and Dante, and Milton, and Shakespeare, and Goethe, and Bacon, and Pascal, and Scott, and Carlyle, and Ruskin, and Browning, and Arnold, and Tennyson, and Gladstone. But there is no need. The Bible is its own greatest witness. It is self-authenticating.

Is there any one work in all non-Christian

literature that could be classed with the "Civitas Dei," the "Divina Commedia," the "Summa Theologiae," the "Imitatio Christi," the "Paradise Lost," the "Pilgrim's Progress"? These are matchless in their kind, and they owe their supremacy to their kinship with the Bible.

"Will you set the 'Confessions' of Rousseau," it has been asked, "side by side with the 'Confessions' of Augustine, or compare Paine's 'Age of Reason' with Hooker's 'Ecclesiastical Polity'? Does not the history of all literature prove that not even the brightest wit or the keenest genius — not even the stately eloquence of Bolingbroke, or the universal learning of Diderot, or the glowing imagination of Byron, or the flashing witticisms of Voltaire,— can save the writings of men, however gifted, from perishing of inevitable decay, if they sin against the rules of morality, or are aimed against the principles of faith?"

The greatest test of literature is time, and the fact is patent that, whereas the books of far-away time are to-day read by scarcely any one outside of the class-room, and whereas books of more recent times which had a great reception on their appearance are already almost forgotten, the Bible is

being more translated and circulated now than ever before, and is being read, not by one nation only, but by all nations, for "it has not only overleaped the barrier of time, but it is the only book in the whole world that has been able to overleap the barrier of nationality."

And we need not do more here than affirm that its aesthetic influence has been as great as its literary influence, To estimate that influence upon art, we have but to recall the names of such as Giotto, and Rembrandt, and Tintoretto, and Botticelli, and Fra Angelico, and Raphael, and Michaelangelo, who owed more to their subjects than their subjects could ever owe them. When a Dante and a Milton would find themes which would give scope to their genius and range for their thought, they turn to religion and the Bible, and receive there both suggestion and inspiration for the "Divine Comedy" and "Paradise Lost." Turning to oratorio, we see that all the masters wrought on this highest level. Handel's "Messiah," Hadyn's "Creation," and Mendelssohn's "Elijah," not to speak of Spohr, Sullivan, Bach, Mackenzie, Elgar, are so universally and perennially cherished just because they touch us at the center and sound us to the depths.

The influence also of the Bible upon sculpture and architecture has been widespread and abiding. The realms of thought, feeling, and action have all been invaded, elevated, and ennobled by this Book of books. Eloquently has Farrar summarized the influence of the Bible in this direction. He says:

"It is a literature which no age or nation can equal or supersede, though every library in the world had remained unravaged, and every teacher's truest words had been written down. What problems do these books leave unexamined? What depths unfathomed? What heights unscaled? What consolation unadministered? What conscience unreproved? What heart untouched? How absurd it must be to scoff at a book which, through all the long centuries, thousands of great men have reverenced in proportion to their greatness: a book for which, in age after age, warriors have fought, philosophers labored, and martyrs bled!

"Its literary splendor was acknowledged even by heathen critics like Longinus, who referred to the sublimity of Genesis and the impassioned force of Paul. It exercised the toil of Origen and Jerome; it fired the eloquence of Gregory and Chrysostom; it molded the thought of Athanasius and Au-

gustine; the 'Summa Theologiae' of St. Thomas Aquinas was but a meditation upon its theology, and the 'Imitatio Christi' of St. Thomas a Kempis an attempt to express its spirituality. All that is best and greatest in the literature of two thousand years has been rooted in it and has sprung from it. It has inspired the career of all the best of men who raised strong arms to bring heaven a little nearer to our earth. St. Vincent de Paul learned from its pages his tenderness for the poor, and John Howard his love for the suffering, and William Wilberforce his compassion for the slaves, and Lord Shaftesbury the dedication of his life to the amelioration of the lot of his fellow-men. Has there been one of our foremost statesmen or our best philanthropists who has not confessed the force of its inspiration? It dilated and inspired the immortal song of Dante and of Milton. All the best and brightest English verse, from the poems of Chaucer to the plays of Shakespeare in their noblest parts, are echoes of its lessons; and from Cowper to Wordsworth, from Coleridge to Tennyson, the greatest of our poets have drawn from its pages their loftiest wisdom. It inspired the pictures of Fra Angelico and Raphael, the music of Handel and Men-

delssohn. It kindled the intrepid genius of Luther, the bright imagination of Bunyan, the burning zeal of Whitfield. The hundred best books, the hundred best pictures, the hundred greatest strains of music, are all in it and all derived from it."

And who can estimate

(*b*) *The Domestic and Social Influence of the Bible.* From the very beginning the Bible was learned and cherished in the home. Timothy knew the Holy Scriptures "from a child." It was the first reading book; and it is held by some that the number of Bibles to be found in private houses in the first three centuries has been underestimated. Tertullian tells us that the reading of the Bible in common was one of the practises of the Christian home; and he urges this fact as an argument against mixed marriages, because in such a case the custom becomes impracticable. He also pictures how husband and wife entertain each other with psalms and hymns, and vie with each other as to who shall best sing to God's praise. Tatian speaks of Christian maidens sitting at the distaff and singing about the divine revelation. A picture of domestic piety is furnished by the occasion of Monica's death. Her son Augustine and his son Adeodatus were over-

whelmed with grief. Eodius took the Psalter and intoned the One Hundred and Tenth Psalm, all present making response. All the teachers of the first centuries, Justin tells us, counted upon this private use of the Scripture and encouraged it. When, in the time of Constantine, public worship was by many being substituted for private devotion, preachers exhorted the people to use the Bible at home.

The dark Middle Ages brought a decline in the reading of the Bible, but that practise was revived with the awakening soul of nations, and when the art of printing was introduced the Bible became the people's Book, and daily Bible reading was regarded as a Christian's duty.

In the nature of the case we have not a wide literature that we can consult on the subject of private and domestic reading of the Scriptures, yet, scattered through memoirs, biographies, and elsewhere are to be found many illustrations.

We learn from the letters of Bismarck to his wife that he read his Bible daily.

When Oliver Cromwell was dying he asked that Philippians 4: 11-13 should be read to him.

"He repeated the words of the passage to

himself. When the apostle spoke of his contentment and submission to the will of God in all conditions, he said: 'It's true, Paul, you have learned this, and attained to this measure of grace, but what shall I do? Ah, poor creature, it is a hard lesson for me to take out! I find it so.' But when he came to the words which followed, faith began to work, and his heart found comfort and support, and he said, 'He that was Paul's Christ is my Christ too'; and so he drew water out of the wells of salvation."

We all know the story of Sir Walter Scott, who when dying said:

"Bring me the Book." "What book?" asked Lockhart, his son-in-law. "*The* Book," said Sir Walter; "the Bible,—there is but one."

And J. M. Barrie relates that a short time before his mother died his father put her Testament into her hand, and it fell open at the fourteenth chapter of John. She had been a great sufferer, and she knew where to seek for comfort and strength.

But perhaps there is no finer illustration of the place and power of the Bible in the home than the picture which Robert Burns has drawn of a family gathering round the

Bible, in his "Cottar's Saturday Night." To look at the father as he

> "Wales a portion wi' judicious care,"

and to hear them sing their evening psalm, and think of what such exercises imply, is to see how abundantly warranted was the patriotic outburst that

> "From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
> That makes her loved at home, revered abroad."

Well does Mr. Muir say, "The home-life which gathers round the Bible and the family altar is sacred in every way; and the nation is sane and strong, free and prosperous, in proportion to the Bible-loving homes within her borders." The cry for "altar and hearth" has its fulness of meaning only for those who have Christian homes.

The conception of the family Bible is a very beautiful and grand one.

And what can we say of the social influence of the Bible? So widespread has this influence been, so continuous and pronounced, that to relate it would be to relate the history of civilization. Under the beneficent influence of the Bible cruelty has given

place to pity, corruption has given place to high moral standards, and slavery has given place to the right to freedom. It is the Bible that has taught us to reverence womanhood and to safeguard childhood. It is the Bible that has motived the establishment of asylums, hospitals and orphanages, that has sent out into the world noble Christian patriots like Wilberforce and Granville Sharp, and Robert Raikes and John Howard, and Elizabeth Fry and Catharine Booth.

The Bible has always been, and ever will remain, the sworn enemy of corruption and oppression, and the mother of compassion and liberty, and nations, no less than society and souls, have received its deep divine impress.. "It was the Bible which saved England from sinking into a tenth-rate power as a vassal of cruel, ignorant, superstitious Spain, whose Dominicans and tyrants would have turned her fields into slaughter-houses, as they turned those of the Netherlands, and would have made her cities reek as she made Seville reek with the bale-fires of her Inquisition! This queen of books is essentially freeing, health-giving, ennobling, inspiring, and were all its beneficent effects extracted from society and civilization, we would all be back to paganism and barbarism.

One other aspect must be just touched upon; namely,

(*c*) *The Moral and Spiritual Influence of the Bible.* All moral awakening and spiritual quickening are traceable directly to the Word of God. Never has there been a true revival of religion in our own or any land that did not originate in and lead to this divine revelation. It is the foundation of the Church's faith, and the spring of her life. In earlier times, in Scotland, when the light of the Reformation was breaking, one of the nicknames of those who sought to be obedient to the truth that God was revealing was "New Testamenters,"—a name which speaks for itself.

Yes, truly, this Book is the Word of God. Other books, the very best, disappoint and fail us, but this one never. Other books come and go, but this one abides forever. Other books appeal to intellect, or conscience, or heart, but this one appeals to them all. Other books are for certain occasions and seasons, but this one is needed at all times and is equal to all occasions. Other books are for specific people and ages, but this one is universal and timeless.

No book has been more bitterly assailed, neither one so gloriously vindicated. Julian

and Celsus, and Porphyry, and Bolingbroke, and Hume, and Voltaire, and Strauss, and Renan, and Eichhorn, and Graf, and Wellhausen, and Kuenen, have all fired their deadliest volleys; yet, in spite of all, it marches on to ever new triumphs, *seeming to be, claiming to be,* and *proving itself to be,* the Living Word of God.

FINAL WORD

If, then, the foregoing be true, it is the manifest duty of every one of us to believe what God has here revealed of himself and his saving purpose and power, and to obey what here he has enjoined. We may read a thousand volumes and feel under no obligation to pay any further attention to any of them, but not so with the Bible. It never leaves a man where it finds him, because it bestows privilege, opens up opportunity, and creates responsibility every time we consult its pages. Being of divine origin, it speaks with sovereign authority, and each of us turns aside from it at the cost of his present and eternal undoing. Let us take this precious Word to our bosoms and our business, and prove it to be more than sufficient alike for faith and practise.

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